
CLEAN AIR FUND



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Tackling air pollution and the climate crisis together

The Clean Air Fund is a global philanthropic initiative with a mission to tackle air pollution around the world, improve human health, and accelerate decarbonisation. We bring together funders, researchers, policy makers and campaigners to find solutions that will provide clean air for all.

Air pollution and climate change are inextricably linked. These two global challenges share many causes, such as transport, the power sector, industrial emissions and crop burning.

Tackling air pollution contributes to climate change mitigation as well as improving public health. In the UK, for example, our work resulted in Birmingham, Manchester and Bristol committing to new Clean Air Zones. Although plans are currently on hold due to COVID-19, these CAZs will substantially reduce air pollution from transport, simultaneously contributing towards climate change mitigation.

We believe the Clean Air Fund is best placed to tackle the climate crisis from the angle of combating air pollution. We are building the clean air movement by leading a coalition of funders interested in climate change, global health, children and transport/mobility. Together, we identify, fund and support a multinational portfolio of clean air programmes.

We currently centre our efforts in four core countries: India, Poland, Bulgaria and the UK. We also have projects in China and Brazil. We have identified six strategic pillars for sustainable air quality change: data, impacts, communications and awareness, policy and politics, field-building, and implementation.

Despite growing interest from funders in climate change, the proportion of philanthropic giving to climate issues is still small. Climate change is often still seen as a contentious topic. Additionally, the cost-effectiveness of climate funding can be difficult to quantify, so it may seem less attractive than investments that result in more obvious, short-term wins. However, the fact that investing in clean air simultaneously provides an opportunity to tackle multiple other global issues, including health, children's development, equity and climate change, may appeal to funders.

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Given the limited funds available to climate issues, funders should aim to be as strategic and collaborative as possible to maximise their impact. Identifying key gaps, coordinating efforts, and sharing knowledge and expertise will support the rapid scaling and replication of successful solutions. Innovative, cross-cutting solutions will be particularly needed as countries try to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

Recommendations for funders

- **Fund neglected areas:** Our Clearing the Air report highlights that less than 0.05% of global philanthropic funding on air quality is going to Africa and Latin America. This is an important gap to fill to address the inequitable burden of disease and meet global climate goals.
 - **Support research:** To date, more than 60% of investments have focused on policy and communications. We also need investments that improve our knowledge of the impact of air pollution, expand data networks, and promote the implementation of solutions.
 - **Build capacity:** As the number of stakeholders working on air quality increases, forward-thinking foundations can be at the forefront of building capacity, collaboration and coordination.
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